DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 203 874 IR 009 461

AUTHOR Gotsch, Constance H.
TITLE Uses of Cable Television in Eight Midwestern Communities.
PUB DATE 14 Apr 81
NOTE 34p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cable Television; Community Information Services; *Court Litigation; *Educational Cooperation; Educational Needs; *Educational Television; Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Courts; *Federal Regulation; Higher Education; Interviews
IDENTIFIERS FCC v Midwest Video Corporation

ABSTRACT

This study of midwestern cable television systems was designed to accomplish three purposes: (1) compare recommended administration and franchise provisions with actual administration and franchise provisions to see how these policies relate to the future development of educational channels; (2) determine how educators and cable managers work together to franchise and administer the channels; and (3) assess this working relationship as it relates to the Supreme Court decision in the FCC vs. Midwest Video Corporation case. The study was limited to a sample population of eight out of 22 midwestern cable systems with local educational channels. Data were gathered through personal interviews with system managers and educators using the systems, and their responses are summarized in three sections corresponding to the purposes of the study. Recommendations to educators and managers are concerned with their working relationships, channel development and expansion, assessment of community education needs, and teacher involvement in media production. Further study is recommended in the same areas, as well as the franchising process and the long-range relationship of the Midwest Video Decision to educational channel development. Descriptions of the systems studied are appended and fourteen references are listed. (LLS)

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USES OF CABLE TELEVISION IN EIGHT MIDWESTERN COMMUNITIES

by

Constance M. Gotsch

April 14, 1981

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INTRODUCTION

Twentieth Century technology placed many new communications media at educators' disposal. Among these one can find community antenna television (CATV), which sends signals on coaxial cable from an antenna through a system's head end to homes, schools or offices (Gable, 1971) by modulating video or audio information onto a high-frequency carrier wave. The higher the frequency the more information it held (Baer & others, 1974, p. 4). Thus a cable television system carried about 10,000 times more information than did a telephone line (Bair, 1971), including the entire frequency spectrum of radio and television channels (Ledbetter, 1974, pp. 9-9). This represented a tremendous expansion of channel capacity for a given community, because all twelve Very High Frequency (VHF) channels could not be used without invading another community's air space. Cablecasters did not broadcast open-air signals, therefore cable systems could deliver all twelve channels interference free. Practical limits to this delivery system existed, but despite these limitations, cable television systems did offer much information to the public, ranging from ghostfree VHF signals to two-way communication and non-broadcast channels (Gable, 1971).

Realizing the potential benefits for cable services to communities, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated that one public, one government, one leased, and one educational access channel be set aside for community use by cable companies. In addition, companies had to provide communities with twenty-channel capacity. In 1972, these FCC Access Rules affected systems commencing operation in the top 100 television markets after March 31 (National Education Association,

Franchising for Schools Appendix FCC Access Rules, 2). Four years later, in 1976, the FCC modified the access regulations to include all systems serving 3,500 subscribers or more, regardless of television market size, (Federal Communications Commission, 1977).

Cable managers had to provide access channels in accordance with FCC regulations to legally hold franchises. Beyond that, they had no responsibilities to educators. While educators had a legal framework within which to demand channels and equipment, they had to make contractual agreements at the local level with cable operators to ensure optimum channel development and operation. The FCC issued no regulations governing these areas.

Many educators worked with educational access channels in the early 1970's and wrote suggestions for developing local contractual agreements and franchise provisions. Baer and others (1974, pp. 125-27) and the National Education Association (Franchising for Schools, 2) listed franchise provisions for educational access channels. Gable (1971) listed eight uses for cable television's abundant channels: (1) distributing open-channel instructional television programs at a variety of times to increase viewing flexibility, (2) showing films from a central library, (3) obtaining dial access computer information, (4) serving special audiences, (5) educating teachers, (6) exchanging student-teacher productions among schools, (7) educating adults enrolled in high school equivalency programs, college courses, or on-the-job-training, and (8) television teacher conferences.

Other authors have recommended ideas for channel budgets, criteria to determine proper channel use, and guidelines for developing channel audiences. Each of these writers stressed the importance of both the

active citizen role in developing educational channels and the creation of a cooperative working relationship between educators and cable company management, to ensure the best possible educational channels for communities (Adler and Baer, 1972, pp. 128-29; Cable Television Information Center, 1973; Carpenter, 1973; National Education Association, 1).

Educators had two tools with which to work as they planned and administered channels. First, they could depend on FCC Access and Channel Capacity Rules for the legal right to demand educational access channels. Second, they had experiences of other educators planning cable services to use in two ways: (1) as contractual agreements between cable operators and educators for channel administration, and (2) as local franchise stipulations.

This situation changed in April, 1979. Midwest Video Incorporated, a St. Louis-based company, challenged the FCC's right to promulgate access regulations in the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. The FCC won the case, but Midwest Video appealed to the Supreme Court. In April, 1979, the Supreme Court reversed the lower court decision, overturning the FCC access regulations, and implying that local communities could mandate access (Justices Rule, 1979). The FCC issued an order voiding the Access and Channel Capacity Rules (Brown, 1979).

As a result educators were limited to local franchise stipulations and contractual agreements when developing channel allocations. Neither the stipulations nor the agreements related to FCC Access Rules, because the Access rules governed system channel capacity and the number of channels allocated to access; not the day-to-day administration of educational channels. Local franchise provisions or contractual agreements performed this function, and included such things as plans for joint use of production

facilities by educator and cable company, policies for training production staff, plans for fitting educational programs into a specific school curriculum, plans to develop a target audience, guidelines for the cost of wiring schools, and so forth. Much of the literature on cable television suggested the content of these local agreements, but none of the literature revealed which had actually been tried. The literature also stressed the importance of educator participation in franchise procedures for educational channels, and the importance of development of a working relationship between educator and the cable company manager to maintain and administer channels. However, none of this body of writing indicated how educators had participated in the franchising process or how they had developed working relationships with cable company managers. Without any such guidelines, how could educational channels be developed, maintained, and administered at the local level, especially now without FCC regulations to justify their existence? To answer this question, cable television system managers and educators using these systems were personally interviewed by the author. The procedures and results of this study will be discussed in the remainder of this article.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The study was designed to accomplish three purposes: 1) to compare recommended administration and franchise provisions with actual administration and franchise provisions to see how these policies related to future development of educational channels, 2) to determine how educators and cable managers worked together to franchise and administer channels, and 3) to assess this working relationship in an effort to determine how the Midwest Video Decision might relate to the future of educational channels.

PROCEDURES

The population for study consisted of 22 midwestern cable television systems, and was defined by the number of hours of educational programming per week offered by each system. Using a table of numbers, a stratified random sample of ten systems was selected, keeping the study to a manageable size.

One cable manager refused to grant an interview. This left nine systems for examination, since the sample was drawn without replacement. Another cable manager did not keep his interview appointment. His system was removed from the sample, leaving eight systems for the final analysis.

Factual information was gathered concerning franchising, organization, administration, and use of educational cable channels, as well as how and why channels developed as they did. To collect data, the personal interview method was employed for both educators and managers of systems in the sample.

Frequency counts were used to identify ownership type, franchise provisions, and administration procedures. These were compared to proposals for ownership, franchising, or administration of educational channels. Correlations compared opinions of cable managers to opinions of educators on the issue of the exchange of mutually beneficial information. See Appendices A and B for details on sample and statistical results.

LIMITATIONS

Originally, the study was limited to cable educational channel franchising and administration. It did not include examination of public, leased, or government access channels, or cable company local origination channels. Further, some public access channels carried educational programs. This study defined the term educational as materials developed

for formal as well as informal home or school instruction (Wood and Wylie, 1977, pp. 5-6). Therefore, examination of public access channels did occur, but only when used for educational purposes.

This study was limited to examination of franchising and administration directly related to educational access programs. It did not examine possible affects of more general cable franchising procedures and provisions on educational channels.

CONCLUSIONS

Two general comments can be made. First, educators and managers tended to disagree on answers to items in the interview schedules. Second, the detailed answers that educators and managers gave were recorded and transcribed. A great deal of information was gathered from these recordings and is used to explain responses. While these answers raised subjects not directly covered in the interview schedule they had related interest. Some of these subjects will be suggested for further study.

The research questions related to each purpose of the study will be presented in the following three sections: 1) administration and franchise provisions, 2) the working relationship of educators and cable managers, and 3) the relationship of FCC v. Midwest Video Corporation to development of educational channels.

Administration and Franchise Provisions

1. How do actual channel administration policies compare with recommended administration practices?

According to managers, recommended policies existed for training staff to run channels, developing policies to allocate budgets from user institutions to channels, fitting educational access programs into larger educational settings including student-teacher interaction, or use with other

media, and developing a target audience and fitting educational programs to that audience. Policies did not exist for joint budgeting of educational channels with educators.

Educators did not report a policy for joint budgeting or a policy for joint equipment sharing with cable managers. They reported that all other policies existed. Managers said in tape-recorded comments that they sometimes informally shared production equipment with educators. Though asked to indicate 'no policy' if formal provisions did not exist, it was discovered from manager comments that some of them failed to choose this answer, prefering to call the informal sharing of equipment a policy. This could have accounted for the answer discrepencies between samples to the item concerning equipment sharing.

Further, the taped comments revealed that some managers answered the items for educational channels as they were instructed to do. Some answered for public assess channels, which they administered, and which cablecast some of the programs defined as educational by this study. Managers explained that they trained staff to work with the community to run the public access channel, for example. This could have caused some of the disagreement as to whether certain policies existed or not for educational channels.

Policies that existed before January 1, 1979, remained in effect after that date, according to the members of both samples, except for policies to develop target audiences for channels, which half the educators did not have after January 1, 1979, and policies to share equipment between cable managers and educators, which half the managers did not have after January 1, 1979.

In general, policies were not deleted to accommodate a decrease in channel use or capacity, according to both users and managers. For roughly half the systems they were not changed or added to accommodate increased channel use or capacity. When change did occur, it did so for reasons unique to individual systems. For example, one educator explained that he now had a midband channel for interschool communication. When he programmed information of community interest, he used the public access channel. When he programmed interschool communication, he used his own channel. This flexibility meant to him both increased channel capacity and increased use. Another educator allowed his manager to use his school channel to program public service announcements when the school was not using it. For this manager, this use represented an increase in channel capacity. Another manager combined the public school channel with the access channel, leaving the university in his town with its own channel. To the manager and the university educator, this represented an increase in channel use.

2. How do actual system characteristics compare with recommended system characteristics?

Provisions did not exist for interconnection with neighboring systems and interconnection within the same system. Managers and educators indicated that systems were small enough not to require interconnection with themselves in order to provide a high quality signal to subscribers. Except in systems in Rockford, Illinois, and Duluth, Minnesota, which did interconnect with neighbors, managers and educators said that they had no neighboring systems near enough to share local information as programmed on school channels.

Provisions that did exist included the following: provisions for the number of channels available to users, plans for local origination channels,

and provisions for distribution of signals to user institutions. Existence of two-way capacity for systems could not be ascertained, since managers and educators did not agree as to whether systems had this characteristic. Half of each sample had no provision for the expansion of educational channels.

Several managers and educators explained that most provisions were created informally and did not exist in franchises. This informality could have created the discrepency in answers for educators and managers. Some of the respondents prefered to indicate that provisions existed informally, and they did not select the answer "not in franchise" as instructed to do if provisions did not exist in the franchise. Other educators and managers explained that state requirements mandated access and that local franchises had little to do with access provisions.

3. Is there a relationship between system characteristics and educational channel development?

Educators said that the development of system capacities helped educational channel development because channels gave educators access to another teaching medium, brought the needs of the school system to the attention of the community, or provided the community with alternative television programs. Users perceived a lack of development of system capacities as hindering educational channel development, though users unable to name specific hinderances outnumbered users who could name specific hinderances. The educators naming specific capacities they wished to add to systems listed educational channel expansion and two-way capacity as desirable additions to increase program capabilities.

Managers reported either that the development of system capacities encouraged channel development, or that system development attracted subscribers. In the later case, managers said that educators did not use

their channels to capacity, therefore, system development made no difference to channel development.

Manager comments suggested that managers perceived educational channels as part of a larger cable television system, which they considered adequate for educational channel development and service. Educator comments suggested that they perceived their channels in terms of their own needs and not as part of the larger system.

4. How do actual franchise provisions compare with recommended franchise provisions?

Provisions existed for carriage of other kinds of educational signals including ETV, PTV, or ITFS and for guidelines to install cable drops to users. Because of discrepencies in answers between educators and managers, it could not be ascertained whether the rest of the policies studied existed or not. These included provisions for sharing user/company facilities, plans to evaluate user performance in channel administration, plans to evaluate management fulfillment of franchise requirements for educational channels, and plans for a channel administrative board.

Once again, educator and manager comments indicated that for some systems, provisions existed informally and not in franchises. Some respondents with informal provisions did not answer "not in franchise" if provisions existed only informally. This could have caused the answer discrepencies for these items.

Educators and managers indicated that educational provisions had been placed in franchises for a variety of reasons, including perception of a need for such services by educators, cable managers, city councils, or the FCC. Comments indicated that the reasons varied from system to system according to individual needs. Indeed, no one reason for inclusion emerged

for educational franchise provisions. Several managers and educators did not answer the item, explaining that they had not been present when systems had been franchised.

Educators and managers said that their system characteristics, franchises and administration provisions satisfied them for the present and for the forseeable future. However, some educators and managers indicated possible future crowding of educational channels to be a possibility because educators had no channel space on which to expand.

Educator and Manager Working Relationships

1. Which original (Pre-January 1, 1979) educational access channel administration policies did educators make? Which did cable companies Make?

2. Which current (Post-January 1, 1979) educational access channel administration policies did educators make? Which did cable companies make?

Users reported that they made their own administration policies both before January 1, 1979, and after that date. They explained that this occurred because they administered educational channels without manager help.

Both before and after January 1, 1979, managers reported users to be makers of all policies but those for training staff to run channels. Managers explained that users generally made their own policies, but that managers helped occasionally by offering technical expertise and teaching them how to use their channels when schools first received them.

3. How was the administrative responsibility divided between channel user and cable management for educational channel administration?

Depending on the individual cable system, managers, users or both groups made the division. Some managers and educators reported that since managers were ultimately responsible for the entire cable system, managers determined the parameters of channel use by educators. These parameters were defined by managers as limitations of system capacity, such as the number of channels available to users. Managers did not always agree with their educators as to who set the parameters of channel use, but all did state in recorded comments that educators programmed their own channels.

Educators said that formal boards of administration did not exist. Managers agreed, but they answered the item concerning boards by saying that boards of users administered channels. Several managers admitted that because they did not involve themselves with the day-to-day administration of channels, they did not know the structure of channel administration. This lack of knowledge could have accounted for the disagreement in respondent answers to that item.

When managers and educators indicated that they did work together to administer channels, they explained that they did so on an informal basis. Users generally consulted managers concerning technical problems or malfunctions, such as poor signal quality or signal interruption.

Managers were satisfied with the performance of users in programming channels. Because formal boards of administration did not exist, four educators did not rate their boards' performance. Those users who did answer the item showed no pattern of evaluation of performance. Several commented, however, that more educators should have involved themselves in channel administration. Usually the school or university media director served as a committee of one to administer channels.

Users of channels fell into two distinct categories. Public access users tended to be informal educational groups, namely community service agencies. Educational access users tended to be formal educators, such as elementary schools, secondary schools, or both, and universities.

Managers indicated that they often did not know for sure who used educational channels, since managers did not program these channels. Some managers answered the item with regard to public access channels, the users of which managers could identify because managers ultimately administered channels. Some managers guessed who used educational channels and admitted to guessing. The managers' differing responses could have accounted for the disagreement concerning channel users.

Public access users did not involve themselves in franchising, at least to the knowledge of educators and managers questioned. Many respondents admitted that they had not been in their present communities when franchising occurred, so they did not know which users were involved in it. Educational access users might have had some involvement in franchising at the public school level, though within systems educators and managers could not agree as to who participated in franchising.

4. Which franchise decisions did educators make? Which did cable managers make?

Franchise provisions included both those for system characteristics and for educational channel administration. Managers appeared to have made guidelines for cost of cable drops to schools, plans for carriage of other kinds of educational signals to schools, provisions for the number of channels available to users, and provisions for local origination channels in three cases. Users were also involved with managers in making provisions for distribution of signals to user institutions.

Several managers explained that they had the right to make provisions they made since they ultimately were responsible for their cable systems' development and service to subscribers. Most managers and educators said they discussed technical capacities related to educational channels with each other as these capacities were developed, modified or changed.

5. Is there a relationship between system ownership and access channel development?

In the sample studied, only multiple system owners or local companies operated systems. In each case one system served the community sampled.

Educators expressed satisfaction with company ownership, stating in comments that their relationships with managers had been positive and that the cable companies maintained franchise provisions for educational channels. This maintenance represented a relationship between company ownership and channel development for educators.

Managers also commented that their company relationships to users were positive. Managers perceived themselves as showing these relationships both by fulfilling franchise provisions and by financially supporting channels. They defined financial support in terms of supplying cable drops at cost or free of charge to educators and not in terms of direct contributions to educator budgets for channels.

6. What mutual benefits could educational channels bring to educators and managers?

Both samples explained that since educators were responsible for their own programs, they evaluated their own program needs. Both sides said, however, that they sometimes exchanged informal evaluation of audience response to programs. Managers answered this item stressing the informal

nature of the exchange. Educators tended to answer in terms of formal ascertainment studies, while explaining that occasional exchanges occurred informally.

Educators and managers did not agree as to whether they exchanged ways to attract subscribers. Managers suggested that they exchanged this information with public access users. Some managers believed that educators could not attract subscribers because they produced school-oriented not community-oriented programs. Educators did not believe themselves to be in the business of attracting subscribers since they cablecast to a very specialized audience.

Midwest Video and Educational Services

1. What changes were originally planned for cable educational channel administration before the Midwest Video Decision?

2. Will unplanned changes in channel administration result from the Midwest Video case?

3. Will the Supreme Court's decision relate to any changes in system capacity for educational channels?

4. Will unplanned changes in franchising result from the Midwest Video case?

5. How do these changes compare with present administration or franchising decisions for channels?

Educators and managers in three systems planned to expand channel capacity for educational use before Midwest Video. These plans were continued unchanged after the case. Managers indicated that since they did not offer equipment to educators on a regular basis, no plans had been made for equipment expansion for educators. These plans had nothing to do with the

nature of channel administration described earlier in this work. Two educators planned equipment expansion, one before and one after Midwest Video. These plans were still in effect.

Managers and educators had not planned any changes in channel administration before Midwest Video. No plans were made for immediate changes in franchising or administration of channels after Midwest Video. Some managers and educators believed that the case would not change the long-term status of educational services either in terms of system development or in terms of administration or franchising. When respondents stated that changes remained to be seen, managers made this statement for the relationship of system capacities to channel development. Educators made it for the relationship of franchising and administration to channels. Educators explained that administrative changes might result for them in relation to managers' need for channel space. No educators expected any major changes for the immediate future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Two kinds of recommendations will be made: 1) those to educators and managers, and 2) those for further study.

Recommendations to Educators and Managers

1. Educators and cable managers should make more effort to meet with each other to discuss how different systems operate in order to learn how different communities are developing educational cable channels.

2. Educators and managers have no need to feel that their informality of partnership is unique or improper. Educators and managers in the system studied had very informal working relationships. Educators and managers indicated that they expected their relationships to remain informal in

the future. Since this is the case, educators and managers might consider developing this kind of relationship if they have not done so already.

The first two recommendations are based on educator and manager comments that they welcomed a study such as the one just completed because they wanted to develop educational channels. Respondents wanted to know if their colleagues encountered the same problem that respondents encountered both in working with each other and in maintaining program schedules or equipment, for example.

When respondents explained the informal natures of their working relationships, many members of each sample expressed the concern that their relationships with each other were unique to their own systems. Respondents believed that other educators and managers were approaching each other in a more formal, organized fashion. The results of the study revealed that such was not the case.

3. The literature on cable television and education has some worthwhile information for educators and managers looking for ideas concerning channel development.

The literature most useful is that dealing with suggestions for franchise provisions and administration procedures. Some of the provisions in the search of literature were incorporated into franchises by sample systems. These provisions included plans for carriage of additional educational television signals to school systems, or plans for the installation of cable drops to educational institution, and others discussed earlier in this article. The literature of suggested franchise provisions should be studied, by franchise developers in search of ideas for educational services to both new and old systems. For specific titles, see attached bibliography.

4. Franchises should include plans for educational channel expansion.

The search of literature called for this provision, but half the systems sampled did not include it in local franchises. Some educators and managers missed having it and suggested it as an inclusion that should have been made at franchising time.

5. Managers and educators should explain their responsibilities to cable systems and to educational systems more clearly to each other.

Both groups revealed that they knew little about each other's input into the system. This evaluation occurred both in their comments about their working relationships and in their disagreement as to the answers to interview items. Exchange of information about responsibilities would help educators to understand the limitations and possibilities for educational channel programming within the confines of a larger cable communications system. It might help managers to better understand how educators use channels and how much channel capacity or system development educators might realistically need for optimum channel use within school systems.

6. Educators should do their own ascertainment studies of community educational needs and audience reaction to programs. Exchange of such information as proposed by Burns in Access Workbook #3 "Cable Cooperation," an unpublished report from New York University's Alternative Media Center, is not necessary if educators maintain their own channels.

Educators indicated that ascertainment studies cost money and took time, neither of which were plentiful to media personnel. However, students could help such studies. Elementary and high school students could learn to become discriminating television viewers by being asked to evaluate programs in the school from which they go the information. College level research classes could learn the fundamentals of conducting ascertainment research. Teachers

and media personnel could find new uses for channels within individual systems. Such discoveries could lead to the employment of full channel capacity for educators.

7. Ways need to be found to involve more teachers in media production and evaluation.

Some educators commented that only media personnel administered channels. Teacher development of ideas for programs could lead to better use of channel space because more people would be involved in the time-consuming task of developing television shows. Very often the media director cannot devote his entire day to television since he must also concern himself with such things as running a library or ordering overhead transparencies. Hence, television channels go unused.

8. Educators must continue to involve themselves in franchising channels and they must become familiar with the franchising process, as well as with the franchises that exist for their own systems.

This familiarity might help them determine the limitations and possibilities for educational use of the systems with which they work. Further, since the FCC can no longer mandate educational access channels, it will be necessary for access provisons to be included in local franchises. For this inclusion to occur educators will be forced to demand services from municiple governments.

9. Educators and managers should not be too concerned about the immediate effects of FCC v. Midwest Video Corp. on educational services.

Managers of systems studied did not appear to wish to remove educational channels from cable systems. In fact, some managers wished that educators would use their channels more than they currently use them. It is too soon, according to some educators and managers, to determine the long-range effects

of the Supreme Court Decision upon existing cable systems. It is suggested that educators and managers keep in contact with each other to learn of these effects as they emerge and to learn how educators and managers deal with these effects.

10. If educators and managers wish to have joint channel administration plans drawn up in contracts and franchises, as proposed in the search of literature, they should plan these relationships from the inception of educational channel services. For the systems sampled, separate administration was planned from the beginning of channel development.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. The working relationships of educators and managers should be examined further to determine whether there is truly a need for the formality which literature suggests. The relationship should be further studied to determine possible improvement for it.

2. Ways to increase use of channels should be studied. Since several educators mentioned the fact that budgets constrained channel use, these studies could resemble the feasibility of Miles (1973) in Appalachia, in which he accounted for existing systems, programming needs, and resources available to bring cable services to remote mountain areas.

3. Ways to involve more educators in channel administration should be explored.

4. Franchising methods should be studied, but they should be examined from a historical perspective, since there appears to be a turnover of personnel at cable companies and schools resulting in a lack of knowledge of present franchising histories of systems.

5. Archives of city councils, cable companies, and schools should be examined to learn how franchises can be negotiated at the local level. If

educators and managers know how the franchising process worked in other communities, they will be able to better adapt the process to their own communities.

6. The long-range relationship of FCC v. Midwest Video Corp. to educational channel development should be studied to determine if educators working with new systems or renegotiating franchises in existing systems will be able to get space for educational channels.

7. In the future, a larger sample of systems should be studied so that opinions of educators and managers could be more easily compared to each other concerning channel development and the educator and manager working relationships. A larger sample might also clarify the relationships of system development and ownership to educational channels.

8. Interview schedules should be developed to consider the separate administration of channels and the informal working relationships of educators and managers. This could lead to a clarification of the administration process and the kind of working relationships educators and managers have. This clarification might lead to models of such relationships for new systems with educational channels.

APPENDIX A SYSTEMS STUDIED

All together eight systems were studied of the original sample of ten. Eight educators and eight managers were interviewed. Since the titles of the managers varied greatly, the people most closely associated with educational channels participated in the interview.

The eight systems studied differed in size, location, channel capacity, ownership, and use. A brief description of each follows:

Rockford Cablevision, Incorporated. Location: Rockford, Illinois, population 27,632 (County and City Databook, 1977, p. 578).

TV Market: Top 100

Channel Capacity: 30; TV 7, educational access 1, government/public access 1, automated, 3, unused 18.

Interconnection: Interconnects with Loves Park system.

Franchise Area: Rockford and surrounding Winnebago County.

Homes in Franchise Area: 51,000.

Subscribers: 9,500.

Date Started: June, 1973.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: Local; General Media Corporation, Rockford.

Vice President and General Manager: Mr. Frank Sheley.

Located in northern Illinois, Rockford has several colleges and numerous industries. Rockford Cablevision has one full-time, locally originated educational channel, offering about 55 hours a week of instructional and school-related programs. Fred Kinnerley, Director of Instructional Resources for the Rockford Public Schools, administers the channel, which both elementary and high school instructors use. Rockford College and Rock Valley College have used the channel in the past, but they do not use it now.

Community agencies, such as churches or social services, or community interest groups, such as clubs of one kind or another, use the public access channel for their programs.

Generally, the cable company sets the parameters of educator use for the educational channel by determining whether or not the educators will have full-time access to it.

The educators program the channel and use their own equipment for production. The cable company takes responsibility for maintaining and administering the public access channel.

Rockford Cablevision carries two public televison stations, WHA, Madison, Wisconsin, and WTTW, Chicago, Illinois.

Platteville Cable TV Corporation. Location: Platteville, Wisconsin, population 9,599 (Characteristics of the Population 1970 Census, Wisconsin, p. 56).

TV Market: Smaller.

Channel Capacity: 12, TV Channels 10, educational access 2.

Interconnection: Interconnects with University of Wisconsin close-circuit system.

Franchise Area: Platteville, Grant County.

Homes in Franchise Area: 3,800.

Subscribers: 1,678.

Date Started: November, 1966.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: Local; Platteville Telephone Company.

Manager: Dean Parish.

This southern Wisconsin town is the home of one of the University of Wisconsin's many campuses. The Department of Telecommunications uses both

educational access channels to offer university-related cultural programs to the public and to teach students of broadcasting the art of production and station management. The University puts instructional programs on its own closed-circuit system. Channel users have total responsibility for programming and administering channels. The cable company provides and maintains both channels for educators' use. Platteville's secondary schools have occasionally used the educational channels, but do not do so presently. The system carries public television station WHA, Madison, Wisconsin.

Northeast Minnesota Cable TV. Location: Duluth, Minnesota, population 260,599 (County and Cita Databook, 1977, p. 558).

TV Market: Top 100.

Channel Capacity: TV Channels, 7; automated 9, public access channels 1, educational access channels 1, unused 8.

Interconnection: Interconnects with Superior, Wisconsin system.

Franchise Area: Duluth, Minnesota; Superior, Wisconsin, St. Louis and Douglas Counties.

Homes in Franchise Area: 43,307.

Subscribers: 7,100.

Data Started: August, 1973.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: MSO, Teleprompter Corporation, New York.

Systems Manager: Mike McPhee.

Duluth is a medium-sized city situated on Lake Superior just opposite Superior, Wisconsin. It boasts of shipping and fishing industries and of the University of Minnesota. The Duluth Public Schools program super-band channel K throughout the school day. Audio-visual Department Director Lee Mesedahl explained that educators use channel K for instructional programs

and interschool communications. Programs the school wished to share with the public aired on Public Access Channel 3. Primary, secondary and adult educators created programs for the public school system.

Systems Manager Mike McPhee explained that the cable company sets the parameters for public access channel use by educators and administers the public channel. For the educational channel the public schools provide programs. McPhee said that he worked closely with Mesedahl and the Duluth Board of Education to maintain channels.

Northeast Minnesota Cable carries WDSE-TV, Duluth, the local public television station.

General Television of Minnesota, Incorporated. Location: St. Cloud, population 151,073 (County and City Databook, 1977, p. 578).

TV Market: Outside TV Markets.

Channel Capacity: 20; TV channels 9, pay cable 1, automated 2, educational access 1, unused 2.

Franchise Area: St. Cloud and nearby towns, Stearns and Benton Counties.

Homes in Franchise Area: 59,700.

Subscribers: 4,460.

Date Started: 1963.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: MSO; General Television, Incorporated, Minneapolis.

Manager: Bob Michels.

Farms and resorts surround St. Cloud where Minnesota College, a branch of the University of Minnesota, makes its home. The college is not the primary cable educational user, however. According to Brad Veenstra, Media Services Director School District 742, primary and secondary schools make most

use of the cable. The district has full-time use of its educational channel, and at the time, it programmed about 50 hours per week. Budget cuts have restrained program hours somewhat. Occasionally, community groups wishing to inform the public on some topic appear on district-originated talk shows. Students and teachers make their own programs.

The educators have total programming and administration responsibility for their channel. Systems manager, Bob Michels, indicated that his company merely maintains the channels. Also his system carries public television station KTCA, St. Paul, which educators use in their class room.

Hawkeye Cable Incorporated. Location: Des Moines, Iowa, population 328,391 (County and City Databook, 1977, p. 558).

TV Market: Top 100.

Channel Capacity: 35; TV channels 6, pay cable 1, automated channels 6, educational access channels 2, other origination 2, unused 17, 12+ converters.

Franchise Area: Des Moines and surrounding towns, Polk County.

Homes in Franchise Area: 90,000.

Subscribers: 22,500.

Date Started: June, 1974.

Number of systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: MSO; Heritage Communications, Des Moines.

Program Manager: Dave Martell.

Hawkeye program manager Dave Martell indicated that channel 8, the public school channel, cablecasted school-related information, such as the lunch menu, but that the school system initated no other programs. However, Des Moines' institutions of higher education have their own channel, channel D. Michael Havice of Drake University's School of Journalism explained that

his institution offered public information programs in the evening and used the channel as a laboratory for broadcast students. The area college and Grandview College also used channel D and the three schools had formed a consortium to pool financial and production resources to create programs. Drake made the most use of the channel. Martell explained that the cable company worked with the educators to maintain channels and equipment and encouraged the public schools to do their own program. The cable system carried public television stations KDIN, Des Moines, and WOI, Ames.

Columbia Cablevision. Location: Columbia, Missouri, polulation 67,230 (County and City Databook, 1977, p. 548).

Channel Capacity: 35; TV channels 9, pay cable 1, automated 2, educational access 1, public access 2, government access 1, other origination 1, unused 18.

Other Services: Two-way.

Franchise Area: Columbia and Boon County.

Homes in Franchise Area: 20,500.

Subscribers: 8,300.

Date Started: July 1968.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: Limited partnership.

System Manager: Phil Hanson.

Stevens College and the University of Missouri are both in Columbia. The University of Missouri programs channel 10, normally during the times that school is in session. Budget cuts halted summer programming. The University mainly used the channel. Stevens College occasionally used it. The Columbia public school system does not program the cable system at all. Community groups wishing to inform the public use the public channel.

The cable company administers and maintains the public access channel and maintains the university channel. The system carries KETC, St. Louis' public television station, which reaches the Columbia public schools.

Telemedia of Western Ohio. Location: Greenville, Ohio, population 12,380 (Characteristics of the Population, 1970 Census, Ohio, p. 13).

TV Market: Top 100.

Channel Capacity: 30; TV channels 9, automated 1, educational access 1, government/public access 1, unused 18.

Other Services: Two-way.

Franchise Area: Greenville and Dark County.

Homes in Franchise Area: 5,000.

Subscribers: 2,655.

Date Started: April 1977.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: MSO; Telemedia of Lake Erie, Ashtabula, Ohio.

Manager: Gerald Cormer.

Greenville is a small western Ohio town in farm country and it has a relatively new cable system. The high school has not yet received a wire so the elementary schools use the educational channel for the moment, putting out about ten hours a week of information. Community groups, unless working on a project with the schools, use the public access channels.

The cable company provided the educational channel to the school district which has entire administrative and program production responsibility. The cable company administers the public access channel, according to Systems Manager Gerald Cormer. Cormer's home office is in Ashtabula, Ohio, located on Lake Erie, a day's drive from Greenville. Despite the distance,

Greenville public school media specialist, John Poyer, communicated easily with Cormer when channel maintenance.

Tower Communications Incorporated. Location: Ironton, Ohio, population 15,030 (Characteristics of the Population, 1970 Census, Ohio, p. 13).

TV Market: Top 100.

Channel Capacity: 12; TV channels 10, pay TV 1, educational access 1,

Franchise Area: Ironton and nearby Coal Grove, Lawrence County.

Homes in Franchise Area: 7,638.

Subscribers: 5,055.

Date Started: October 1963.

Number of Systems in Area: 1.

Ownership: MSO; Communications Properites, Incorporated, Austin, Texas.

Manager: Alfreda Rist.

Chief Technician: Bill Coones.

Located on the Ohio River just across the border from Ashland, Kentucky, Ironton has many steel mills and chemical refining works. It is an industrial town and has no institutions of higher education. Phil Steed, TV coordinator for the public school system, works with Cable Manager Alfreda Rist and Chief Technician Bill Coones to operate the channels. Steed explained that his hours of use are flexible depending on the school's needs or the type of activities in town, which students videotape both for school and public consumption. He averages about 10 hours of programming a week. When he is not using the channel the cable company puts time/weather information on it but Steed controls channel use. Programming can be instructional or in the realm of public information. The cable system carries WPBO, Portsmouth, Ohio's public station.

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